WAYSIDE BLOSSOMS

MARY MATTHEWS BRAY

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MARY MATTHEWS BRAY

RICHARD G. BADGER
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TO

C. M. B.

Thy name, Beloved, lendeth to this verse
A fragrance as of April violets
Or Summer Roses.
It is like a dream of June,
In a dull wintry day.

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WAYSIDE BLOSSOMS

I saw some handfuls of the rose in bloom,
With bands of grass, suspended from a dome,
I said "What means this worthless grass, that it
Should in the rose's fairy circle sit?"
Then the grass—weeping—said
"Mine is no beauty, hue or fragrance true,
But in the garden of my Lord, I grew."

From Saadi's Gulistan

WAYSIDE BLOSSOMS

Flowers by the wayside growing
  Needing no culture nor care;
Asking only a foothold,
  Only sunshine and air.

Dandelions gay and golden,
  Fringing the dusty street;
In haste to greet the springtime,
  Fearing not April's sleet.

Violets dim and tender
  Hiding amid the grass;
Buttercups sunny and cheerful,
  Nodding to all who pass.

Daisies, milk white daises,
  Tossing as though in glee;
Clover blooms, sweet and useful,
  The haunt of bird and bee.

Celandine, meek yet persistent;
  Wind flowers fair and frail;
Filmy white lace of Queen Anne;
  Mallows pearly and pale.

Graceful columbines calling
  "List to my bells,—O, hush!"
Roses, wild roses, blowing,
  Pink as the dawn's first blush.

Lowly plantain and yarrow
  Making the most of dearth;
Sorrel in crimson patches,
  Clinging heath-like to earth.

Chicory softly tinted,
Blue as the sky o'erhead;
And asters, everywhere asters,
The stars of earth outspread.

Lilies of tawny orange,
Making a goodly show;
Golden-rod plumes and pennants,
Flaming like lamps aglow.

Wilding blooms of the Wayside,
Sown, broadcast, near and far;
Sweet in their simple beauty,
Dear to our hearts they are.

Like unto wilding blossoms,
Are these unstudied lays;
Frail hints of grace and fragrance,
Along Life's common ways.

Out of the whirl of living,
Out of its hopes and fears;
Its aims, its stress and labor;
Out of its smiles and tears;

Out of friendship's fealty,
And love's beguiling dream;
Out of memories tender
These wayside verses gleam.

SWEET SPRING WITH VIOLETS LADEN

Sweet Spring with violets laden,
Steps blithely o'er the hills;
The slumbering sod she wakens,
Her breath unlocks the rills.

Where'er her light foot treadeth,
The earth with grass is fringed;
When her blue eyes she lifteth,
The sky with blue is tinged.

She smiles, and lo! responsive,
The day light lingers long;
The murmur of the South Wind,
Doth echo still her song.

Stirred by her swaying garments,
The budded leaves unfold;
And fast she droppeth violets,
On hillside and on wold.

MAY DAY SONG

Away to the woods, for the Mayflowers are blooming,
We'll give them glad greeting this first day of May;
Come children and maidens, come brothers and mothers,
Away to the woods, and be happy today.

Brush away brown leaves and search among mosses,
There they are hiding away from your view;
Down by the rocks and on bright sunny hillsides,
There they are smiling and waiting for you.

The wild winds of March rang a summoning call,
And the warm April rains breathed a soft wooing lay;
The sun threw warm kisses, the birds sang of love;
So they sprang up from slumber to welcome the May.

Waxen and pearly and pink-tinted blossoms,
Hues of the snow-drift and hints of the rose;
Breathing from dewy lips odors entrancing,
What fairer flower can the summer disclose?

"Epigae Repens," the botanists call them,
And Trailing Arbutus rings sweet to the ear:
Dearer the name that our fore-fathers gave them,
Saying "Henceforward our Mayflower is here."

Whispers of hope and sweet tokens of promise,
Such did they seem to that sad stranger band;
Beautiful messengers, foretelling harvests,
Which later should crown the wild wave-beaten strand.

EVENING FANCIES

Up the crimson bars of sunset,
My thoughts mount fast and far;
O'er the silvery track of moonbeams
They travel from star to star.

Oh for a hand that could picture
The beautiful visions I see!
Oh for the skill to embody
The dreams that come unto me!

Melodies wildly entrancing,
Ring in the breezes of night;
Oh for a voice that could render
The wonderful songs aright!

Splendors of sunset and star beams,
How the West blushes and burns!
Longing and rapture and sadness,
Thrill me and fill me, by turns.

Lustres of moon rise and star gleams,
Lo, in the East now they reign!
Longing and sadness and rapture,
Blend in a pathos, not pain.

UNREST

Rest thee, unquiet brain! Canst thou not rest?
Thou 'mindst me of some little wildwood bird,—
Whose careless song from many a spray was heard,—
Imprisoned suddenly within a room!
Flying from pane to pane, from door to door,
With desperate energy, unknown before.

Dost thou not see a power above thine own,
From freedom and from work has shut thee out?
Turn where thou wilt, thou art compassed all about,
By the strong wall of stern necessity;
Thou can'st but dash thy wings 'gainst that in vain,
Then fall back faint with weariness and pain.

Why wilt thou strive? The self-same Hand that gave
Life, and the power to thee for toil and song,
Hath for a season, by this barrier strong,
Made them of little value unto thee,
Thou need'st must wait; why not with patient grace,
Till thou canst see the way from out thy prison place?

CHRYSANTHEMUMS

In the dim November weather,
When the fields are bare and brown;
And the trees with patient sadness,
Watch their last leaves flutter down;
When the summer's cherished blossoms,—
All have vanished; then doth come
Latest in the gay procession,
The dear, brave chrysanthemum.

Lighting with its cheerful beauty
Every garden plot and plain;
Looking up to greet the sunshine,
Bending low beneath the rain;
Drooping under frosty touches,
Of the nights so long and chill;
Rising up again undaunted,
Fair and bright and smiling still.

Struggling bravely for existence,
While the winter hastes apace;
Smitten in the unequal contest,—
Who could win in such a race?
Soon the bitter cold enfoldeth,
All things in its icy clasp;
Gentle blossoms, pale and withered,
Dead they lie in winter's grasp.

SWINGING

Under the trees, on this bright summer day
Two little children are busy at play;
Hand clasped in hand, swinging together;
Smile answers smile from one to the other.

Upward they rise, high, higher, in air,
And the sunlight gleams on their flowing hair;
Now downward they go, far into the shade,
And the gold is brown, on each bright young head.

Oh! little they think—those children so fair,
Happily swinging, unmindful of care,
How like a symbol, their afternoon's play,
Of life's many changes; of earth's checkered way.

Now on the hilltops of fortune they'll ride;
Then in dim valleys, perchance they must bide;
Oft in the sunshine, their pathway may keep;
Often the shadows around them will creep.

Upward or downward, still safe in the swing,
While to the rope, and each other they cling;
Thus, through the whirl of the years may they
move,
Guided and guarded by conscience and love.

MY FRIEND AND I

In the sunshine of fortune, she sits,
I stand in the shade;
Her hopes and joys seem perennial flowers;
Mine bloom but to fade.

She wishes; Lo! fairies of old
In human disguise,
Hasten the wish to fulfil,—Mine
Into empty air flies.

She plans, and some spirit of love
Into mortal shape wrought,
Hovers o'er to protect from all harm;
My plans come to naught.

She strives, and her effort is crowned with success;
Is it merit or chance?
I strive, but my striving is vain;
I have broken my lance.

THE RIDDLE OF LIFE

The good I wished for, was not given;
The good I asked not,—that is mine;
O, troubled heart, dost thou repine
And wonder if there be a Heaven,
This life's sad riddle to define?

O heart! thou need'st not wait for Heaven,
To learn that both in peace and pain,
In hours of sunshine or of rain,
In bliss withheld, or blessings given,
Something there is, for thee to gain.

I sat on deck in the morning light,
And watched the blue waves sparkling
bright,
As they played about the prow;
And idling thus, the hours away
I seemed to hear, mid the dashing spray,
The song that follows now.

Morning Song

Merry indeed is the life we lead,
Neither toil nor trouble, we fear;
We foam and dash, we sparkle and splash
We sport from year to year.

No comrades we own, save winds, alone,
But a jolly band are they!
Like us, they are free, and dance with glee
When they join us in our play.

Though man would fain all things enchain,
Unto his lofty will;
No slaves are we, right valiantly
We guard our freedom still.

The ships so strong—that with labor long
And skill and care, are wrought—
With them we sport, while we bear them to
port,
As a child with toys just bought.

O, merry indeed, is the life we lead,
Neither toil nor trouble we fear!
We foam and dash, we sparkle and splash,
We sport from year to year.

The day was dying, glory-crowned,
And cloud-wrought spendors blazed all round,
The sky before so clear;
The waters caught a crimson glow,
And 'mid the rippling music's flow,
This song I seemed to hear.

Sunset Song

Far under the waves, are gleaming caves,
Filled with all things most rare;
Amber and gold of wealth untold
And precious pearls are there.

And fairy bowers of pallid flowers,
With sea-weeds twining round;
And sheltered dells, where bright lipped shells,
And glistening stones abound.

And coral groves, where the merman roves,
With comrades bold and gay;
Through the arching halls, their laughter calls,
As they chase each other in play.

And mermaids fair, with streaming hair,
Sit on the moss-strown floor;
Weaving the gems into diadems,
Or counting their treasures o'er.

No sunbeam glides through the restless tides,
To tell of the garish day;
But a mellow light, most fair to sight,
Through cool depths finds a way.

Slowly the pageant flitted past,
And twilight shadows overcast
All things with sober gray;
The rippling waves seemed hushed in sleep,
But from the dark unfathomed deep
Came up a mournful lay.

Evening Song

Treasures more bright to the wistful sight,
Lie under our foaming tides,
Than all the gold a thousand fold,
Or starry gems besides.

Not all return, of those who yearn,
O'er wintry wastes to roam;
And a wailing cry goes up on high,
From many a stricken home.

On the ocean beds, are bright young heads,
For whom no dawn will rise;
O, tragic fate! O, grief how great,
Over such sacrifice!

True hearts and brave, beneath the wave,
Lie wrapped in dreamless rest;
Ah! none may tell, how long and well,
They strove the floods to breast.

The surges rave o'er many a grave,
To longing love unknown;
And wild winds sweep across the deep,
With dirge-like undertone.

NEW YEAR'S EVE AT SEA

Swiftly our bark glides on her way,
Round her the freshening breezes play
The waves dash up with whitening foam,
And bear us ever nearer home.
Soft on our track
The moonlight falls;
Bright in our wake
Flash silvery balls,
But wind nor wave nor pale moonlight
Care ought for the year that will die to-night.

The sailor's work for the day is done;
To his pillow slumber sweet has come;
The din of labor, the sounds of mirth
As hushed as though they ne'er had birth.
No lonely isle
These waters lave;
No sail save ours
Gleams o'er the wave;
I sit alone in the shadowy light,
And watch with the year that will die to-night.

He must not go unmourned, unloved,
For he a generous friend has proved;
From him I've won a boon much prized,
And hopes, long cherished, realized.
Through dangers rife
On sea and land,
He held me safe
Within his hand,
Therefore my heart is sad to-night
For the year that will die ere the morning light.

He showed me distant lands and fair,
And as I roved a stranger there,
He led my wandering steps to meet
Friends whom I cannot soon forget.
Around me now
Their forms arise,
The spirit of sleep
Before them flies,
And so I keep my watch to-night,
With the year that will die ere the morning light.

The hours speed on; his end is near;
Soon must we greet another year;
Another year untried and new;
What shall befall ere his reign is through?
What will he prove,
A friend or foe?
What will he bring,
Delight or woe?
Scenes of darkness and scenes of light
Flit through my mind as I muse to-night.

The clock strikes twelve! A friend has fled!
A stranger is standing in his stead!
For the parting breath no bell was rung,
O'er the lone bier no dirge was sung,
For the year gone
I drop a tear;
Then turn to meet
The new one here:
His voice is gentle, his smile is bright,
I welcome the year that comes to-night.

HOMEWARD BOUND

"Homeward bound! Homeward bound!"
The waves give back the gladsome sound,
The winds are whistling it all the day
As through the rattling cordage they play;
The stars seem chanting it as they roll,
In sweet accord with the hymn of the soul.

"Homeward bound! Homeward bound!"
On every lip these words are found;
To their music we fall asleep at night,
They are sounding still at morning light;
They form the theme of the sailor's song,
They cheer him through the night-watch long.

"Homeward bound! Homeward bound!"
Not e'en by the noise of the tempest drowned;
Still clear and sweet, above its roar
These words are whispering ever more,
"Fear not, though stormy winds may rave,
There's a pleasant land beyond the wave."

"Homeward bound! Homeward bound!"
Visions of bliss in these words are found;
Dreams of a dear familiar shore
Rise at their bidding our eyes before;
Hopes of an hour when friends will meet
To greet us with words of welcome sweet.

"Homeward bound! Homeward bound!"
Phrase with a wondrous glory crowned;
'Neath its magic spell all eyes grow bright;
It hath power to make e'en sad hearts light;
The sweetest words that our hearts dream o'er
Save these, alone, "At home once more!"

A CHANCE MEETING

I met him on the crowded street,
My garments brushed his very feet.

My pulses leaped with sudden thrill.
My heart throbbed wildly,—then was still.

With upraised look his glance to meet,
I turned at once, my friend to greet.

He saw me not; with look intent,
And purpose firm, straight on he went.

But did he feel no prescient cheer?
Did nothing tell him I was near?

The hurrying throng between us stepped
And forward with the crowd he swept.

Lost in the length'ning space too soon,
A shadow dimmed the afternoon.

INDECISION

"To be or not to be!" That was the question
Which brooding Hamlet asked in days gone by;
"To do or not to do!" This is the problem
That we to solve must try.

Whether to choose the task that lies in waiting,
Or seek for one that sounds a clearer call;
Whether to grasp the good that seems the nearer,
Or wait what may befall.

Perhaps the question is not one for conscience,
Only that for the best we may decide;
It is so hard to come to a conclusion
When there seems naught to guide.

We count the reasons for this course, or that one;
We weigh the evidence on either side;
We try to balance this and that advantage,
But still the scales will slide.

We come to ways that part with slight divergence,
So slight indeed, scant cause for choice we see;
And yet we know not whither they may lead us,
Nor what the end may be.

At times grown weary of such vain endeavor,
Weakly irresolute and sorely tried,
We envy the complacent ones, who never
Can see the other side.

Often in dire perplexity we covet
An arbitrary code of right and wrong;
Or wish we could believe in absolution;
And save the struggle long.

"To be or not to be!" That painful problem
Was solved for Hamlet, in the days long past.
"To do or not to do!" This haunting question,
We must decide at last.

WAITING FOR SPRING

Haste, gentle Spring, we are waiting for thee,
Waiting the gleam of thy garments to see;
Waiting and watching to welcome thee here,
Tarry no longer, thou gem of the year.

Come crowned with garlands of leaves and of flowers;
Send thy soft breath, through forest and bowers;
Bring the dear singing birds back in thy train,
Scatter sweet odors on hillside and plain.

Quicken our frames with thy life giving clasp,
Chilled into torpor, by Winter's cold grasp;
Waken fond memories our spirits to thrill,
Hopes that, though slumbering, have life in them still;

Thoughts that shall grow 'neath the spell of thy power,
Dreams like thy days, mingled sunshine and shower;
Fancies which from thy soft odors have birth,
Longings that seem to be scarcely of earth.

Haste thee! O, haste thee! Why longer delay?
Thou wilt be welcomed by grave and by gay;
Hearts have grown weary in waiting for thee,
But in thy loved presence, all sadness shall flee.

TWO PICTURES

Softly glows the October sunlight
Through a veil of golden haze;
Lighting up the scarlet oak trees
Till they look as if ablaze;
Falling on the graceful maples,
Many hued as sunset clouds;
Gleaming over beech and alder
Standing thick in golden crowds.

Through the woods are maidens roving,
On this quiet Autumn day;
Hands are filled with leafy splendor,
Heads are crowned with garlands gay.
Yet each face a shadow weareth,
From no passing cloud, down-thrown;
Blending with the girlish laughter,
Breathes a mournful undertone.

Through the streets of a great city—
Banners waving overhead,—
Passes now, a band of soldiers,
Marching slow, with even tread,
Fired with youthful exaltation,
Patriot zeal and courage high,
For the honor of their country,
Ready—if need be—to die.

In the door-ways throng the gazers,
Following comes an eager train;
Cheers and sobs and parting blessings,
Mingle with the martial strain.
For the coming night shall bear them,
Southward o'er the ocean dark;

Soon to stand in serried columns
And to dare War's crimson mark.

O, ye maidens, crowned with garlands
In the bright autumnal woods,
Now we know whence comes the sadness
Blending with your gayer moods.
In your hearts you find the picture,
Veiled by distance, from your eyes,
For, among those youthful heroes,
Brothers, friends, before you rise.

RETURN OF THE VOLUNTEERS

O, ye wild waves, cease your turbulent play,
Our loved ones are borne o'er the billows today.

Blow gently ye winds, waft them steadily on
Pause not to rest, till their haven is won.

Bend over them skies with a loving embrace,
Make bright with your sunshine the shadiest place.

Rouse for their sake, Mother Earth, all your powers,
Make the leaves greener,make brighter the flowers,

Sing, little birds, in most jubilant strain,
Let your notes echo from hillside and plain.

Homes from whose circles they long have been torn,
Wake, wake unto gladness; no need now to mourn.

Welcome them, welcome them, neighbors and friend;
While music and banners, their joyousness lend.

Honor them, Country, by word and by deed;
They sprang to your aid in the hour of your need.

TO-NIGHT

O, Sun, hanging low in the crimsoning west,
Soon, soon you will sink out of sight;
But morn is less fair, than this gloaming will be,
He cometh, he cometh to-night.

Long hath his absence been; weary the waiting,
Through months that seemed years in their flight;
Now it is over; he cometh—my lover—
He cometh, he cometh, to-night.

May has gone by, with her hawthorne, her lilacs,
And June smiles, with roses bedight;
I, too, may smile, and wear roses for greeting,
He cometh, he cometh—to-night.

DEATH OF SUMNER

Bend lower, ye whirling wind-clouds,
  Let earth wear a pall today!
In the chill of the wild March morning
  A hero is passing away.

Bow down, O grief-stricken country!
  There has come no sadder dawn
Since the bells for the "Patriot Martyr"
  Tolled through the April morn.

And yet, 'mid the sound of thy mourning
  A song of thanksgiving should swell,
For the son whose fair fame, brought renown
    to thy name,
  Who guarded thine honor so well.

His courage was tempered with mercy,
  For truth and for justice he wrought;
A statesman of statesmen the rarest,
  He could neither be blinded nor bought.

Crown him, O Nation, with bays!
  Weave, poets, your garlands of verse!
Weep, sable-hued children, for him
  Who helped remove slavery's curse!

DECORATION DAY

Again we come with early flowers,
  Our soldiers' graves to strew;
Again with gifts of speech and song,
  We honor them anew.

The lessening ranks of comrades gray,
  Tell how the years have flown,
Yet ever with each fleeting one
  This day has dearer grown.

On hillsides worn by marching feet
  The grass has long been green;
Where bullets ploughed and bayonets
    gleamed
  Now scarce a trace is seen.

The torn and trampled battlefields
  Our brothers died to gain,
By Nature's healing arts restored,
  Are bright with waving grain.

The swift procession of the days,
  With touches calm and sure,
Have soothed the first wild throes of pain,
  And taught us to endure.

And yet beneath the softening veil
  Which Time, in mercy, lends,
Still loyal Sorrow lifts a face,
  Where pride with suffering blends.

Not less the mother mourns her son,
  Her bright-haired son today,
Scepter and crown—life's hope and joy—
  With him have passed away.

Not less does memory summon back,
The young, the strong, the brave.
And hearts still ache, and tears still fall,
O'er many a flower-decked grave.

But over all our pleasant land,
Sweet peace holds gentle sway,
And plenty smiles; oh, not in vain
They trod the martyr's way.

Honor and fame and Union saved;
A race from chains set free;
To guard these gifts, by valor won,
A sacred trust shall be.

And so with mingled grief and pride
We bring our flowers once more,
Once more in speech and song we tell
Their noble story o'er.

WHITE ROSES

O sweet white roses, flinging out your fragrance,
Upon the soft June air,
Do ye recall the tender memories folded,
Within your bosoms fair?

Do ye recall? It may be but a fancy,—
And yet—it may be true—
That the same flowers in each succeeding season,
Come back to us anew.

In one dear summer, with the past long numbered,
Amid its wealth of flowers,
Ye bore a charmed part, which holds you ever
Linked with its golden hours.

In an old garden, in the fresh June weather,
Beside a rose tree tall,
A youth and maiden met, and talked of roses,
Of roses—that was all.

They parted,—but to meet again—and often,—
The woodland ways were free,
And many an hour they spent in the old garden,
Beside the white rose tree.

They came together, in the early morning,
He culled a rosebud fair,
Birds sang, bees hummed, the blue sky bent above them,
He twined it in her hair,

How beautiful it was, the creamy blossom,
With faintly flushing heart,
As though a sunrise cloud had stooped to kiss it,
Then hastened to depart.

They came, together, when the sun was setting,
Its splendors wrapped them round;
Roses he garlanded for her adorning,
She stood before him, crowned.

They came, together, when the evening darkened;
The moonlight's misty veil,
Draped them in filmy folds as in a mantle;
He plucked a white rose pale;

One scarce could deem it was an earthly blossom,
So pure, so fair it shone;
He laid it gently on her lips a moment,
Then pressed it to his own.

O, sweet white roses, flinging out your fragrance,
Upon the soft June air,
Recall ye now, the tender memories folded,
Within your bosom fair?

PARTED

I saw a face, to-day.
As I walked amid the throng;
A face that I knew in days of yore,
Ah, could I but live those sweet days o'er,
Whether life be short or long.

I touched a hand, to-day.
A hand that once held my own;
I found in its clasp both strength and peace.
Alas, for the day of its release!
Alas, for the bliss now flown!

I heard a voice, to-day,
It yet has power to thrill;
A voice, that in the dear old days,
Was wont to chide, to blame, to praise,
In dreams I hear it still.

But hand and face and voice,
From my life have passed away;
The look and the touch, another claims now,
And the tender tone,—a marriage vow,
Doth hold us apart, to-day.

AN OLD WOUND

"Oh, how my old wound throbs tonight!"
Is it a soldier who cries?
And on what battle field did he fight?
It is but a woman who cries,
And the wounds of a woman, are found,
Only on Love's battle ground.

Wherefore this throbbing today,
After the quiet of years?
Only a letter, chance threw in my way;
After the quiet of years,
This letter gleams forth from the past,
And my heart's blood, in answer, flows fast.

I must check it at once,—but with what?
I will try woman's pride,
Try it—that cure that fails not.
I have tried woman's pride,
But its texture is frail,
What is it, at best, but a veil?

There's duty! that remedy old;
But the pain ceaseth not;
There's reason,—but reason is cold,
And the pain ceaseth not;
Sweet "Angel of Patience," oh, fold it in night
At least let it throb, out of sight.

I thought it had healed long ago,
That nothing remained but a scar.
To tell of that terrible blow.
That nothing remained but a scar?
Such hurts are for life; yet one solace I know,
Even pain, hath its ebb and its flow.

LIFE IS NOT ALL POETRY

"Nay! Life is not *all poetry!*"
So said my friend, one day,
And shook his head and sadly smiled,
As half in earnest, half in play,
I called him "raven," bade him "croak no more,"
For life was what one made it,
Poetry, or tedious prose told o'er.

Nay! "Life is *not* all poetry!"
Dear friend, since that bright day,
Year after year, into the silent past
Has winged its unreturning way;
Life lies behind me now!—as then before—
And I have found or made it
Dreariest prose, told o'er and o'er.

AN EASTER CONCERT

Swift-winged the circling hours have sped
And brought again our concert night;
We gather here from many a home,
Drawn by a spell of might.

Again within these well-loved walls,
Our songs of praise arise;
Familiar voices greet our ears,
Familiar forms our eyes.

Yet, with each word of prayer or song,
Strange thrills of sorrows blend;
One voice is gone; we mourn to-night
Our leader and our friend.

His generous heart, his helping hand,
His days of cheerful service given,
Have they then vanished from the earth?
Is every sweet tie riven?

Nay, but the rose's perfume lives,—
The rose that blooms but for a day,
Still from its faded petals sheds
Faint odors round our way.

Shall not the fragrance of a Life
Outlast the sweet breath of a flower?
Shall not good deeds and kindly words
Outlive their special hour?

Our friend still dwells within our hearts,
Though here we see his face no more;
The essence of a life dies not,
When earthly days are o'er.

And therefore, mingling with our grief,
A strain of Easter joy should swell,
For him the joy, for us the prayer,
That we may do our work as well.

BURIAL OF GARFIELD

List to the clangor of bells,
  Voicing a nation's woe,
And the solemn roll of music,
  And banners drooping low.

Gone in the strength of his years,
  Gone in the flush of his fame;
Gone, and the tears of a nation,
  Fall at the sound of his name.

A HARVEST FESTIVAL

No favored soil we boast today,
No tropic clime is ours,
What have we but our sandy shore,
The sunshine, and the showers.

What have we? Willing hearts and hands,
Of labor not afraid,
The tireless zeal, the purpose strong,
To win from all things aid.

Courage and strength that will not yield,
To any task or foe;
The skill to plan, the grace to wait,
For Nature's process slow.

Behold the tokens of success
On every hand wide spread;
Behold the largess given to those,
Who seek their daily bread.

And blush of fruit and bloom of flower,
Their grace and beauty lend;
And woman's skill hath deftly wrought
With manhood's work to blend.

And so our Harvest Festival
We well with pride may keep;
For whoso sows with toil and care,
In joy and peace shall reap.

O, QUAINT LITTLE TOWN

I am thinking of thee, O, quaint little town,
On the shore of the sounding sea;
I know every rod of thy sandy ways,
I could almost name each tree.

Slight is the change from year to year,
That creeps o'er thy hills and plains;
Slight seems the change on thy quiet streets
Or in thy grassy lanes.

But when I turn from the landscape fair,
To the life which crowns it all;
Sad is the change; alas, how fast
The cherished landmarks fall!

The faces, the forms, which my childhood knew,
Are passing like mist away;
In memory keep them, O, home of their love!
They honored thee in their day.

Break softly, blue waves, on the sandy shore,
The sound of thine ebb and flow,
Was their life-long music—no dirge more fit—
Chant for them a requiem low.

ONE YEAR AGO

One year ago to-day,
There passed from earth away,
A noble soul;
A man, whose simple creed
Was perfect truth in word and deed.

A creed no power could break,
Nor art nor influence shake,
And more than all,
He lived the life he taught,
And by his creed his works were wrought.

No life lapped soft in ease
Was his,—on stormy seas,
His years were spent,
Until perchance he caught
The ocean's freedom in his thought.

Its freedom in his speech;
If he could only reach
And grasp the right,
Alike seemed praise or blame,
Alike to him seemed scorn or fame.

Wherever duty lay,
Forever in that way
His feet were found:
What though the path was rough,
His faith and courage were enough.

Though stern of mien he seemed,
Sometimes severe was deemed,
By alien eyes,
If one but knew him well,
The slight mask from him fell,

And opened to the view
A tender heart and true,
A nature large,
Which could itself deny
That it might others' wants supply.

"With tears mine eyes are dim;
If all men were like him,"
A neighbor said,
"How easy would be life,
How free from sin and care and strife."

We, by his blood allied,
We with a chastened pride,
Exultant thrill,
That we his name may bear,
And in such heritage may share.

For him, no dirge we sing,
With solemn joy we ring
Paeans of praise,
For the old life well done,
And for the new life nobly won.

ARBOR DAY

"It seems to have come to stay,
This Arbor Day;
So let us make the most of it we may."

These words with wisdom fraught,
Fell, all unsought,
Upon my ear, and chained my wandering thought.

'Mid April gleams and glooms
And Mayflower blooms,
It comes, this day, for which no cannon booms.

Amid the rush and strife
Of busy life,
It comes, this day, with peaceful duties rife.

It bids us, you and me,
To plant a tree,
Even though our eyes may not its glory see.

It bids us train a vine,
Whose leaves may twine,
Round other homes, as well as yours and mine.

It bids us tend a flower
Through its brief hour,
And learn its tender humanizing power.

The day, thus set apart,
We, with the heart,
Will dedicate unto this gentle art.

Its lesson we will heed,
And bid it speed
Till it shall be the universal creed.

Indeed, it comes to stay,
Sweet Arbor Day,
Then let us make the most of it we may.

MAYFLOWERS AND VIOLETS

Yes, bring the mayflowers beautiful
From woodland nook and dell;
And bring the sweet blue violets,
For one who loved them well.

Fresh firstlings of the springtime,
Of April sun and air,
Bring mayflowers and bring violets
For her the young and fair.

So brief their time of blossoming,
They linger but a day,
They wait not for the summer's prime
Nor autumn's slow decay.

Brief, too, her earthly mission,
Like them she could not stay;
That rare and gentle spirit,
Seemed in haste to be away.

Then bring the mayflowers beautiful
From woodland nook and dell;
And bring the sweet blue violets
For one who loved them well.

WHITHER

The flower-robed Summer is here again,
Over the earth the warm skies brood,
The tiniest weed, the stateliest tree,
Thrills responsive to nature's mood;
The air is astir with bird and bee,
But my friend, O where is she?

I climb the pine-crowned hill top,
I watch the red sunset glow,
The south wind fans me with odorous breath,
The blue waves curl on the beach below;
I climb the hill as often of yore,
But my friend goes with me no more.

I stand in her sunny garden,
I watch her opening flowers,
Lilies, geraniums, roses sweet,
All the bright throng of the summer hours;
The blossoms she loved smile up at me,
But she is not there to see.

I enter her open doorway,
I sit in her unused chair,
Still lingers the spell of her presence,
The treasures she cherished are there;
Others go in at her open door,
But she goes in no more.

The mind with its tireless zeal to know,
The soul with its trusting content,
The heart so burdened with other's woe,
The hand ever ready to help,
The welcoming smile and the word of cheer,
Vain is the quest, to seek them here.

Where then and how does this spirit fare?
Does it find in its onward way
A wider scope for the unworn powers,
A finer part for the hand to play,
Has the heart, since its cares of earth are o'er,
Found rest with the loved ones gone before?

Over the earth the warm skies brood,
And we search those depths of blue,
But there comes no word of the friend we
loved
So suddenly vanished from view:
She had no fear of what Death could show,
We, too, must trust, where we cannot know.

When the great storm-cloud that enwrapped the city
Lifted and rolled away,
Over the drifting snow-mounds flashed a message
That dimmed the bright'ning day.

A message of sad import unto millions,
In cruel bondage led,
For he who bore upon his heart their burdens,
Lo! he was lying—dead!

He, the strong champion of the oppressed and suffering,
The helpless and the weak;
He, who with voice and pen was ever speaking
For those who could not speak!

No creature walked the earth, too poor, too lowly,
For his strong arm to reach;
Freely he offered time and gold and service,
Lessons of help to teach.

He caught the stinging lash, ere it descended;
The timely word he said:
He loosened yokes and bonds and smoothed the pathway
That bleeding feet must tread.

All this he did unasked and unrequited;
Yea, cheerfully he gave
The labor of a lifetime those to succor,
Who knew not that he gave.

Anger assailed him; greed and avarice
Made difficult his way;
The shafts of ridicule fell thick about him;
His zeal they could not stay.

Did they not wound? Perchance they may have
done so;
But never any dart
Through the thick armor of his earnest purpose
Could pierce a vital part.

And so his lonely way, with faith unwavering,
He kept, though sore bestead,
Until, at length, men listened, turned and hast-
ened,
To follow where he led.

A PLEA FOR NIGHT

"For there shall be no night there." *Rev. 21 : 25.*
"There shall be night no more." *Rev. 22 : 5.*

No night in Heaven?—
Night with the distant beam,
Of unknown worlds afar;
The comet's trailing gleam,
And planets circling nearer, shining bright,
Mar's flaming splendor, Venus' mellow light!

Night with its fair young moon,
A crescent set in space,
With waxing glory gifted,
And with a fairy grace,
Veiling defects, that in the day outspring,
Lending a charm to every common thing!

Night with its misty gloom,
Or wondrous depths of blue;
Its flashing Northern Lights,
Which to the startled view
Seem myth-like hints of battles far away,
And wild Valkyria rushing to the fray.

No night in Heaven? No night!
Words bearing heavy cross!
Could we its beauty spare,
Yet should we mourn its loss,—
The consolation of those brooding wings,
The shelter which the darkness o'er us flings.

For rest comes with the night;
A blessed gift indeed;
Since Eden's gateway closed,
Alas, how great the need!
Rest for tired hands, bearing all day their part;
Rest for the tasked brain, and burdened heart.

And joy comes with the night,
Joy unto those who mourn;
Through all the sunlit hours,
From home or dear friends torn;
Again in dreams, they rove in haunts of yore,
And their beloved smile for them once more.

No night in Heaven! No night!
Words bearing heavy cross,
Because we deem Heaven's gold,
Like unto earthly dross.
In the soul's realm,—so veiled from mortal sight,—
We may not need the ministry of night.

IN MEMORIAM

A. E.

Within the place of prayer, we sadly gathered
To say farewell,—since farewells must be said,—
Our hearts in mournful monotone repeating,
"And he is dead! The friend we loved is dead!"
The clouds that dimmed the hues of flower and
leaf,
Seemed but the shadow of our brooding grief.

Up the long aisle, where memory still doth picture
His gracious presence moving as of yore,
Amid the throng, waiting in solemn stillness,
Past his familiar seat, he comes once more;
Borne on by others now with reverent love,
While palm and laurel droop their plumes above.

O, change mysterious! He the earnest thinker,
The tireless worker both with brain and will,
Leader in council, helper of the toiling,
He, who made haste each duty to fulfil;
He lieth there in silence and in peace,
Like one who from all care hath won release.

O, change mysterious! He of nature ardent,
Swiftly responsive both to joy and woe;
Of mood impassioned, yet of conscience tender,
With sparkling wit and humor all aglow;
He lieth there in silence and in peace,
Like one for whom all feeling hath surcease.

From out the garnered treasures in his keeping,
Freely he drew to make the present fair;
Though unto every tie of kinship loyal,
He yet held others in his fostering care;

To all his race he felt himself allied,
A charm he had that drew men to his side.

The charm of sympathy,—a charm alluring—
To share with other hearts the hopes and fears,
Gleaming or darkening o'er them: A potent
power,
A power to waken smiles, to banish tears,
The gift most prized by "sad humanity,"
The matchless grace of human sympathy.

The majesty of calm repose enfolds him,
Languor and pain o'er him no more hold sway;
Love strove with every art to shield and keep him,
But he had caught the flush of a new day,
A fairer dawning than is known to earth,
Why should we grieve o'er an immortal birth?

FACE TO FACE

Face to face again, after long years,
O friend of my early days!
Face to face, but memory calls me
Back to the parting of the ways.

Swiftly I traverse the shadowy spaces,
That have held us since then apart;
Brightly before me, there riseth a vision,
Of days still dear to my heart.

Yet in the far past, I may not linger,
Musing o'er hours that are flown;
In haste I return through the shadowy spaces,
The present hath claims of its own.

Closely I study each well known feature,
For the record the years have brought;
Keenly I notice the subtle changes
That life in its passing hath wrought.

What is revealed in the meeting glances?
Doth the old-time love abide?
What feeling thrills through the clasping fingers,
As they bridge the chasm so wide?

While the lips utter the formal phrases
The greetings of every day,
Doth the old note sound through the commonplaces?
Doth the voice ring true to-day?

O friend of my youth, there had been sore grieving
If I had found thee, changed!
If from that past, which we spent together,
Thou hadst become estranged!

But thou art the same; the wise, the tender,
The comforting friend of yore;
Lightly the passing years have touched thee,
Enhancing each charm the more.

Then what is the feeling, that broods like a shadow,
O'er the joy of this meeting with thee?
It lieth, alas! in the consciousness bitter,
Of the change thou art finding in me.

JUST ENOUGH

Just enough and no more,—
  Thus the manna was given,—
Thou shalt lay up no store,
  Came the mandate from Heaven.
    Enough for thy hunger,
    Enough for thy need;
    Naught over for pleasure,
    Naught over for greed.

Just enough and no more;
  Ever thus doth Life measure,
All the gifts in its store,
  Even Love, its chief treasure.
    Enough for Hope's whisper,
    A promise, a gleam;
    But ne'er the wild rapture
    The bliss of our dream.

Just enough and no more,
  Though we strive and aspire,
Yet we fail evermore,
  Of some height of desire.
    Just enough! Need we more?
    This life is a quest;
    Then on, ever onward,
    Not here is our rest.

WHEATON DAYS

I sit in drear November,
Watching the firelight's glow;
And I see the walls of Wheaton,
The stately halls of Wheaton,
Where we conned our lessons over,
In the days of long ago.

The western light is waning,
The air is chill with snow;
But I dream of Norton woodlands,
The fine old Norton woodlands,
Where the feet of youth went straying,
In the days of long ago.

The darkness broods about me,
The fire is burning low;
Yet the room is bright with faces,
With fair and youthful faces;
They are smiling down upon me,
As in days of long ago.

The wild night wind is rising,
I scarcely hear it blow;
I am listening to the laughter,
The joyous, girlish, laughter;
And the dear familiar voices,
Of the days of long ago.

O, Memory! strange enchanter!
What visions thou dost show!
They thrill me with their gladness,
They shroud my heart in sadness;
For through them glide the phantoms,
Of the days of long ago.

A MEMORIAL

A. B.

In the dear home, by thronging memories haunted,
Another memory now the rooms doth fill,
A thought of her, whose living presence rendered
The home more home-like still.

Strong in the strength of gracious womanhood,
To make herself a power for good, she sought;
O, what a "cloud of witnesses" shall tell
Of blessings she hath wrought.

For life to her meant opportunity;
Each year, each day unfolded duties new;
She met them all with patience undisturbed,
With steadfast mind and true.

And life meant love and happiness as well,
And tender sympathy with human needs,
And watchful interest in new forms of truth,
Outgrowing into deeds.

The burdened and the struggling looked to her,
Children and youth came gaily at her call,
In her wide nature there was help and cheer,
Something she had for all.

So gentle did her ministrations seem,
So quietly she held her even way,
Her gifts fell like the sunshine and the dew,
Beneficent as they.

And yet her life, so blessing and so blest,
So rich in outward charm and inward gain,
Could not escape the common earthly lot,
The doom of grief and pain.

Kindred and friends fell fading by her side,
She could not keep them with her utmost care;
The joyous meetings in the dear old home
Grew year by year more rare.

In the last days of the departing year
Her summons came. O friends indeed bereft!
O town in mourning! reverence as ye must,
The name that she has left.

Yet think of her, where in the bright New Year,
A fairer home receives her into love;
There, from her cherished ones to part no more,
One family above.

MEMORIAL DAY

For the brave who fell in battle,
For the worn by marches long,
For those who writhed and wasted,
In the fever-clutches strong,
For the victims of the prison,
Ah, who so brave as they!
For all our dear dead heroes
We keep Memorial Day.

But since first we brought our blossoms
Year after year has flown,
And fond eyes, that made a summer
Gazing down into our own,
And smiles that were like sunshine,
With the years have passed away,
And now with a broader meaning
We keep Memorial Day.

We drop our fragrant tributes
On many a flag-decked grave,
And we pause to garland others
Whereon no banners wave;
Each spring our fairest blossoms
On some new mound we lay,
Ever with tenderer feeling
We keep Memorial Day.

Just on the verge of summer,
When it seems a joy to live,
We turn from its radiant fullness
A backward glance to give:
For all our fallen comrades
We bring the flowers of May;
For all the loved and vanished,
We keep Memorial Day.

OPPORTUNITY

We do not know the day or hour
When she is to appear;
No herald runneth on before,
To say that she is near.

There is no pomp in her approach,
No ermine on her gown;
She comes in many a strange disguise,
She weareth oft a frown.

"And art thou friend or art thou foe?"
We challenge her apace;
With fleet, soft steps she hastens by,
And half-averted face.

Perplexed by doubts, beset by fears,
We question her anew;
Then turn, and with repentant speed,
The flying form pursue.

In vain! in vain! borne on the breeze,
Like a decree of fate,
Backward we hear her answer flung,
"Thou art too late! too late!"

Oh! clear of mind, and prompt of mood,
And swift her steps to stay,
Are they who win from her the gifts
She hastes to bear away.

THE HAVEN

E. B. E.

The stately house on the hill-top,
With windows o'erlooking the sea,
Stands yet amid clustering maples
And blossoming flowers on the lea.

The doors open wide; the lights glimmer;
And still do the guests go and come;
But where is the mistress who graced it
And made of "The Haven," a home?

We linger and watch for her greeting,
The gentle soft touch of her hand;
We wait for the love that she gave us,
And the help that was ours to command.

Why lendeth she not her dear presence?
Why cometh she not as of old?
And why doth a shadow of sorrow
The house on the hill-top enfold?

Out from its vine-shaded portal,
One day in bright autumn she went,
To the beautiful home of her girlhood,
By some mystical prompting sent.

And there, amid friends and kindred,
She saw a far beckoning hand;
And it called to a longer journey,
Than she in her love had planned.

Alas! and alas! we murmur,
But the mourning is ours alone;
Can there be for her aught but rapture,
As she meeteth again her own?

Tears for the wrecked and stranded
On Time's dim perilous wave;
And tears for the hearts that love them,
Yet are powerless to help or save.

But smiles for all glad fruition,
Smiles only, for her who went
From the beautiful home of her girl-
hood,
To the home of her heart's content.

LIFE

I walked at blush of dawn,
In a rose garden, its fair guests to greet;
I filled my hands in haste, with blossoms sweet;
But, ere the noon,
The loosened petals fluttered at my feet.

I sat beside the sea,
And watched the blue waves in their sunlit play,
And felt the soft caressing of the spray;
But, ere the noon,
A mist crept up and sky and sea grew gray.

I stood upon a plain;
Through the clear air, uprose a mountain cone,
Easy it seemed to reach that airy zone
Before the noon;
Yet still afar it gleamed when sunset shone.

And this is Life! Its morn
With fragrance filled, and bright with radiance thrown,
Along the way, by shining hopes star-sown;
Its noontide mourns
The splendor dimmed, the winged incense flown.

FAILURE

So near, so near the longed-for bliss!
So near to Paradise!
And yet to fail! to reach it not,
To lose my Paradise!

To catch a gleam of its blue skies,
A breath of its soft air,
And yet to find myself shut out!
To stand in dumb despair!

That land of bliss, I sought with pain;
I yearned for Paradise!
Was I not worthy? Wherefore must
I lose my Paradise?

NEAL DOW

Born, March 20, 1804

When first this century dawned upon the earth,
And all its coming years were hidden away
Like uncut leaves, waiting the touch of time,
To bring each page unto the light of day,
Almost coeval with that far-off dawn,
Beside the wintry sea, a child was born.

The peaceful Quaker blood flowed in his veins,
Peaceful, though zealous ever, for the right,
Obedient to the "still, small voice" within,
A law unwritten, yet of utmost might.
When any act of man sets this at naught,
Quakers can fight, in deed as well as thought.

Braced by salt breezes, and the northern air,
The boy grew strong and vigorous and free;
He listened to the voices of the pines;
He listened to the anthem of the sea;
He gazed with joy, on river, lake and rill;
Katahdin's grandeur woke in him a thrill.

From the safe shelter of his quiet home,
He looked out on the world, with eager eyes,
And wrestled with his mates, and sought to gain
From books and work, the help that in them lies.
Did not some prescient whisper call to mind,
The appointed task he was so soon to find?

The Quaker lad, now grown to dauntless youth,
Beheld a giant evil in the land,
By law protected, and by favor fed,
Triumphant, strong, yielding to no demand
A rampant hydra, with the good at strife;
A vampire, feeding on a people's life!

He saw: he heard "the voice," and straightway rose
And called, "Now let us meet and rout the foe!"
But men were strangely blind, and some reviled;
And some were sunk in bondage and in woe;
He fought, then, single-handed and alone,
A later David, with a sling and stone.

And fierce and long, the unequal contest raged;
But others rallied to the leader's side,
And the brave work went on; they would not yield,
Though men should menace, cavil and deride.
Behold, at last the giant fettered lies!
Behold, the state in noble grandeur rise!

The century nears its close; the leader bold
Looks back, rejoicing over work well done;
Then forward to the future, ready still
New work to find before the set of sun;
Though ninety years on swift white wings have flown,
And his fair fame about the world is blown.

ONE BY ONE

One by one, beyond our seeing,
Out into the vast unknown,
Pass the friends, so fondly sherished,
Unattended and alone.

Naught avails our closest clinging,
Naught avails our tender care;
Futile, all our anguished protests,
Vainer yet our deep despair.

To the grave's dark edge we follow,
Stunned by loss and dumb with grief;
"Wherefore?" in our hearts we question,
Wildly seeking some relief.

"Wherefore?" Through our pain it soundeth;
"Why, when life seems at its best,
Must they go, the loved and loving,
Yielding to a stern behest?"

On the grave's brink, looking over,
And across the chasm dread,
Still in thought and love we follow,
Yearning o'er the spirits fled.

"Whither," with pale lips we falter,
"Whither, whither do they stray?"
Oh, for clearer inward vision,
To discern them on their way!

Oh, to follow, and to find them!
In their bliss, or woe, to share!
Joy, without them, is but sorrow;
It were bliss, their pain to bear.

ONLY ONE DAY AT A TIME

Only one day at a time,
Sad heart smitten sore!
Take up the burden of this day alone;
Let to-morrow take thought for its own;
Only one day at a time.

Only one day at a time!
Why plan for more?
Why o'er the cares of to-morrow repine?
To-morrow! It may not be thine;
Only one day at a time.

Only one day at a time!
Why look before?
Care in its wholeness, would crush thee;
Grief in its vastness—Oh, hush thee!
Only one day at a time.

A SPIRIT NOW

"A spirit now;"
You say on thoughts of comfort bent,
"He liveth still,
Though but to earth a brief time lent."

"A spirit now?
A spirit!"—this the hope you bring?
How shall one know,
How greet, a formless, viewless thing?

"A body too,"—
You add, "A spirit clothed upon;
Each one distinct
From each,"—you think the case is won?

Are spirits then,
Tall, strong and beautiful? Have they
A charm like his,
Who with me trod Earth's dusty way?

"No grace of flesh!"
Is my conception, then, too low,
For those unknown
Abodes, whither our loved ones go?

I do not want
A faultless angel clothed in white!
Oh, not for me,
A seraph habited in light!

"What do I want?"
A human being, good and wise,
Thoughtful and kind;
With gleams of humor in his eyes.

I want—my own;
The dear home comrade that I knew;
Just—just himself,
Enticing, tender, radiant, true.

LOOK INTO THY HEART AND WRITE

Into my heart! My heart is like a shore,
Buried 'neath surging waves of sombre gray;
Or like a mountain path—become the track,
Down which a rushing torrent makes its way.

It hath no speech nor language; it is dumb;
Stunned and oppressed beneath a weight of woe;
Thought has no power the burden to remove;
And hope and love, lie prone and crushed below.

Yet when the ebbing tide has left the shore,
Upon the barren sands, sea mosses cling;
Mosses of pallid green or dusky red,
Flung by the waves in their wild harrassing.

And when the mountain flood its course has run,
And summer skies again brood o'er the spot;
Along the torn, scarred path, frail wild flowers spring,
Aster and hare-bell and forget-me-not.

And so perchance, when Time's slow moving hand,
The chilling tide of sorrow, shall restrain;
Within my heart, emerging desolate,
Some thought may linger, born of stress and pain.

And when grief's devastating force is spent,
Along its channel, seamed and boulder-strewn,
Some tender flower of feeling, yet may bloom;
And a faint fragrance, over life be thrown.

THE MUSE'S GIFT

"For the unquiet heart and brain
A use in measured language lies;
The sad mechanic exercise,
Like dull narcotics, numbing pain."

Tennyson.

Once when a child, I wandered far
Into a lonely dell,
And the tall beeches wove o'er me,
A green and golden canopy,
Through which the sunlight fell.

And suddenly before me there,
A radiant being stood;
With filmy garments flowing free,
And lustrous eyes, that smiled on me,
How came she in the wood?

And as with childish awe, I gazed
Upon the vision bright,
In gentle tones, she greeted me,
"I bring, dear child, a gift for thee,"
Ah! did I hear aright?

I took the gift,—the Muse's gift,
A branch of living green;
I tried to thank her. "Nay," said she,
"It may not prove a boon to thee,
Wait thou, till thou hast seen."

Close to my heart, I hid the gift,
"It is a wand," I said.
"A magic wand to ope for me,
Rich realms, where I may rove thought-free
And revel fancy-fed."

"A magic wand, a wondrous gift,
A gift of power and grace;
And it may bring me fame, world-wide,
And it may bring me love," I cried,
"The love of all my race."

Long, long, I hid it near my heart,
I caught its perfume rare;
But in the joys I should have won,
As months and years went circling on,
Alas! I had no share.

I drew it forth—the hidden thing—
I held it up to view;
"It may not be a wand," I said,
"It seems a sceptre, now, instead,
A sceptre strong and true.

"Sceptres are symbols of renown;
I'll bring it to the light;
And it may win me power and place,
And fame, and love of all my race,
If it be used aright."

The months and years went hurrying by;
I found a little place,
A place for service, love and thought;
But nothing by the sceptre wrought
Left on my life a trace.

There came a time of darkness drear,
I drank from Sorrow's cup;
The Muse's gift adown I cast;
What had it brought, in all the past,
That I should bear it up?

The days and weeks dragged slowly on,
Laborious with pain;

Spirit and flesh alike were weak,
Scarcely I cared for help to seek,
Even hope itself, seemed slain.

Crouching with tear-dimmed eyes, one day,
I caught a perfume rare,
And at my feet—before unseen—
It lay—the branch of living green—
Unwithered yet and fair.

I could not choose but pick it up;
I smoothed each crumpled leaf;
When, lo, it lengthend in my hand!
I leaned on it; I strove to stand,
Beneath my load of grief.

And when with halting pace, I sought
Onward again to go;
The Muse's gift became a staff,
Became a strong and trusty staff,
To aid my footsteps slow.

Wands were for fairy folk of old;
Sceptres of kings are seen;
But for each pilgrim soul that strays,
With weary pace, o'er life's rough ways,
A staff is best I ween.

DREAMING AND WAKING

We sleep and dream;
And in our dreams, quick-shifting scenes unfold,
Fragments and hints and happenings manifold;
And flitting forms their petty parts arrange,
And nothing seemeth false nor even strange.

But consummation is not reached in dreams;
Just ere the vital clue before us gleams,
Some sad mischance bids the whole pageant quake,
And with regret or with relief, we wake.

We wake to life;
To life, with all the toil that life involves,
Its vain ambitions and its high resolves;
And swiftly changing scenes fill up the day,
Ane crowding comrades o'er each hour hold sway.

But ever when hope doth the most beguile,
And coy success bestows a dawning smile,
Some fatal flaw undoes the work of years,
And nought is left to us but death or tears.

We sleep and dream;
Yet what are dreams but a strange shadowy life?
We wake to life;
And what is life, but an intenser dream?

ON THE DESERT

A desert land, and one lone wayfarer,
Striding along the dusty, trackless waste;
The sky above him, clear, intensely blue;
He walks as though in haste.

He gazes anxiously on every side,
His hurrying feet, nor rest, nor respite take;
He seeks some cooling stream, some bubbling spring,
His burning thirst to slake.

Mile after mile, before him, as behind,
It stretches on, a barren treeless plain,
Is there no rocky hollow wherein lies
Some stored up drop of rain?

He gazes far into the smiling sky
Its whole broad arch unflecked by any cloud;
How pitiless its azure beauty seems,
He prays for rain aloud.

Life's varied wishes centre now in one,
The riches of the earth on one word wait;
Absorbed in this, all pleasure and all pain,
And hope and love and hate.

Stumbling, exhausted, still he presses on,
Searching for water! water! that desire
O'er-masters every sense, and in his eye
Flames desperation's fire.

He seems to see again the rippling brook,
Where as a happy child, he often knelt,
His lips upon the wave. Oh! for one hour,
To feel as then he felt!

He sees the well beside his mother's door;
He lifts the brimming bucket with his hands;
"Who holds me? Ah! the precious liquid spills!
What mean these iron bands?"

He strives to grapple with his fancied foe;
"Unloose me!" is his wild delirious moan;
No answer breaks the slumbrous solitude;
He finds himself, alone.

"Is there no pity, even in Heaven?" he cries.
"Then am I helpless! oh, that I were dead!"
One last look at the sky,—a shot,—a fall;
A soul from earth has fled.

Had he but known! Less than a mile away,
A little thread of verdure mid the sand,
Showed where the Chino river on its way,
Gladdened the thirsty land.

And there amid the verdure was a ranch;
Oh, sad mischance! Oh strangely ordered lot!
Water, and shade and rest, so near! so near!
And yet, to find them not.

But life hath wild waste places, sadder far,
Than any desert stretches of the earth;
Wild wastes of sin, and penury and shame;
Regions of utter dearth.

O, tempted soul, tortured with wild unrest,
From weary morn to eve; conscious of nought,
Save one dark shadow, ever at thy side,
Until to frenzy wrought!

O, suffering heart, sitting alone with grief,
In the dim, haunted chambers of the past;

Fearing to face a future desolate,
By deepening gloom o'ercast!

Take home this lesson! Take it, ye to whom
The morning brings but care; the evening, pain;
Whose hopes for happiness illusive prove,
As his, for sign of rain.

And yield not to despair! The dreariest lot
Hath oft, some isle of palm, some healing stream;
Look up! Press on! Deliverance may be near!
Yea, nearer than ye dream.

ONE GIFT ABOVE ALL OTHERS, I DESIRED

One gift above all others I desired;
Yea, there were two, for which my spirit yearned;
In youth those fair ideals lured me on,
Nor left me, when youth towards the sunset turned.

The one came circling just within my ken
Afar I saw it, with white wings outspread,
In the high air, flashing serenely on,
Unmindful of the paths where I must tread.

The other, floating lower, sought my home,
And for a little time it lingered there;
A radiant vision, filling all the day,
With splendor and with bliss beyond compare.

I could not keep it. Wherefore know I not.
Too soon it plumed its wings and soared away;
With heart and hands outstretched I followed it,
In vain, in vain! its flight I could not stay.

Why do they haunt us still—those hopes so bright
With promise, that the years do not fulfil?
We fain would banish them but have no power,
Wherewith to hold them subject to our will.

From out the void they seem to summon us!
Are they but echoes by the past set free?
Or are they premonitions, sweet and rare,
Of nobler living, somewhere yet to be?

HAD WE E'ER MET BEFORE

Had we e'er met before, O friend most dear,
Before the day of our first meeting here?
Youth, joyous youth, was ours on that glad
day,
And summer sights and sounds were round
our way.

Our meeting was, or so it seemed, by chance;
We had not planned it, yet at your first glance
There came a sense of something known of
yore,
We met as strangers, yet felt strange no more.

Was that the meaning of the sudden gleam,
Bewildering as a half-remembered dream,
That flushed and faded, soon to re-appear,
Like distant star-beams seen through cloud-
rifts near?

Was it evoked—the thrill responsive, shy,
To that in you, revealed by tone and eye,—
From out some far and unremembered past,
Wherein our ways had been together cast?

Had we then met before? Where did we
meet?
And was that meeting also strange and sweet?
Were you yourself then, or some other self?
And what was I—another or myself?

What were we to each other? What the ends
For which we sought? Neighbors were we,
or friends
With tastes akin? Or lovers met too late,
And parted by irrevocable fate?

Had we then met before, O friend most dear?
What does it matter—since on that day here,
Swift as a winged arrow to its goal
Was my soul's answer to the call of soul.

IN MEMORIAM

C. F. S.

One man less in word and action,
For the right to stand;
One friend more across the border,
In the Unknown Land.

We who knew him, looking backward,
O'er the vanished years,
Marvel at his cheerful courage,
Undeterred by fears;

Noting all the varied service
Of his hand and brain,
Marvel at the will that nerved him
Such force to maintain.

Manly strength and tender feeling
In his being wrought;
Keen-edged wit and speech incisive
Framed his clear-cut thought.

And o'er all, a kindly humor
Played like lambent fire,
Fusing elements discordant
Unto his desire.

Broad his outlook upon nature,
And the world of men,
Bringing to his chosem life-work,
A resourceful pen.

Searching with a reverent interest
Annals of the past,
Over olden times and customs
Some new light to cast.

Wisely living in the present,
  Mindful of its claims;
Listening to its many voices,
  Shaping thus his aims.

Unto all new thought receptive,
  Holding what seemed best;
With the lovers of true progress,
  Marching still abreast.

To his home and country giving
  A devotion rare,
Sympathy, pervasive, genial,
  As the summer air.

Skies of May o'er earth are brooding,
  Calling to the sod;
Making green the paths familiar,
  Where his feet have trod.

He has passed beyond our vision,
  Yet we feel him near;
It may be that he is finding,
  Finding there, as here,

In some fair Elysian meadow,
  Paths as green as ours;
And within that Unknown Country,
  Scope for all his powers.

COLUMBUS DAY

Oct. 12, 1910

It is Columbus Day, and all the land
Has waked in unison, to honor one
Who braved the perils of untraversed seas,
With eyes upraised, to seek in star and sun,
His chart and beacon; one who knew full well
The cold distrust of country and of friend,
Yet kept a quenchless courage, and a faith
In his high mission, even to the end.

But not his fondest dream revealed to him
The grandeur that should crown his ardent quest;
Not even his prescient spirit could discern
What Time should write upon this fair far West.
Yet still in daring deeds; through toilsome days,
The force within him, bade him onward press;
He faltered not amid mutations strange;
He lived his life—a life of storm and stress.

And therefore here, on this historic soil,
This wave-worn shore, this Pilgrim trodden strand,
With thankfulness and reverence due, we come,
Joining with loyal hearts throughout the land,
To honor him,—child of the elder world,
Who, to the "New World" wrought his painful way,—
To twine one blossom in the fragrant wreath,
Of speech and song, hung 'round his name, today.

FLAG OF MY COUNTRY

Flag of my Country, fair flag of the Free,
Proudly thou floatest o'er land and o'er sea;
From mast-head and mountain; o'er hamlet and town,
O, beautiful Banner, our shield and our crown.
From ocean to ocean, o'er hamlet and town,
O, beautiful Banner, our shield and our crown.

Though in the past on grim battlefields torn,
Trailing in dust, and by long marches worn;
Soon, soon, thou hast risen from conflict and night,
Triumphant in splendor to gladden our sight.
Rise, Flag of my Country, from conflict and night,
Victorious ever, to gladden our sight.

Hues of the morning are caught in thy bars;
Calm on the azure, gleam out the white stars;
A light for the nations; a scintillant ray,
Proclaiming the dawn of a glorious day.
Shed, Flag of my Country, thy scintillant ray.
Proclaiming the dawn of a glorious day.

I, who am nothing, rejoice in thy state;
Lo! I am something, because thou art great;
Freedom thy watch-word, for man and for creed,
Justice unfettered by word or by deed;
In the march of the ages, thou bearest a part,
And though but a symbol, thy shrine is the heart.

See, how they gather, the races oppressed,
Seeking a home in our beautiful West!
With only one protest we blazon the turf:
No room in our borders for sceptre or serf;
Float, Flag of my Country, float out o'er the turf,
That has in its borders nor sceptre nor serf.

Flag of my Country, dear Flag of the Free,
Long may'st thou wave o'er the land and the sea;
Still bearing aloft, in the ages to come,
A message of progress; a glad "welcome home."
O, beautiful Banner! in ages to come,
A message of progress; a glad "welcome home."

ROSEMARY AND RUE

"Rosemary for Remembrance.
And for Sorrow—Rue."

"It singeth low in every heart,
We hear it each and all,
The song of those who answer not
However we may call."

—Chadwick

To

T. C. B.

"Now who can take from us, what we have known,—
We that have looked into each other's eyes."

—Gilder

LOW HE LIETH

Low he lieth, pale and silent,
Calm and cold;
All the thoughts we fain would fathom,
Left untold.

Stilled the nature so imperious,
As if slain;
By the hand of Death mysterious,
On him lain.

What if friend or foe bend o'er him,
Silent still;
Heeding nothing spoken of him,
Good or ill.

By our tears, he is not shaken,
Tears that burn;
Pleading words of love awaken
No return.

Over now Life's fret and fever,
All its fire;
And the stress of vain endeavor,
Vain desire.

Over earthly pain and pleasure,
Let him rest;
He of both has had full measure,
Let him rest.

MYSTERY

Oh, the strange mystery o'ershadowing earth,
And darkening all the ways wherein we tread!—
The incompleteness and the pain and loss
Filling us evermore with anxious dread;
What broods within it? Fate inscrutable,
Or Love omniscient and immutable?

We make our little plans; we labor on,
Seeking with zeal to build a shelter strong,
Of work and worth, where we in peace may dwell,
Safe from mischance of earthly storm and wrong,
When lo! a whirlwind sweeps along the plains,
Making a chaos of our plans and aims.

Stunned and bewildered, then we rise again,
And blindly grope about the dreary wreck,
Striving to fit the fragments into shape;
But some are lost, and some with hopeless fleck
And flaw are marred;—to build again were vain;
And we to other tasks must turn with pain.

Afar before us, gleams an ideal good;
So bright it seemeth, that with feverish haste,
We press to gain it, thinking not of ease;
Scorning on lesser joys, our days to waste;
We reach to grasp the prize that seems so fair,
And—we are stretching empty hands in air.

We are so busy with the stern demands,
The needs, the hopes, into each being wrought,
Scant time have we, through morning hours of toil
Through noontide dust and heat for loving thought
Of friends who walk beside us, day by day,
Sharing with us, the roughness of the way.

When evening comes, we say, or it may be,
In the still afternoon, we shall have earned
Leisure and rest; Ah! then in summer fields,
Or 'round the fireside, all that we have learned
On the long journey, shall be given to make
Each day a radiance, for some loved one's sake.

Oh, sad and strange! Before the evening falls,
There comes a whisper from the far unseen,
Beside the hearthstone stands a vacant chair;
Under the summer skies, a grave grows green;
And all our stores of thought and love and trust,
With tears we lavish on unconscious dust.

Is it then so,—is all our labor lost?
Our fair ideals—are they phantoms all?
The friends so dear,—rapt from our longing gaze,
And answering not to love's intensest call,—
Is it by some strange chance, that soon or late,
Must come to all, in the wild whirl of fate?

Alas! Alas! we know not anything,—
Frail creatures of a day, and blind as frail!
We can but trust that this brief earthly life
Is but a part of that beyond the veil,
And, as a whole, doth somehow meet our needs,
Else, bitter sense of wrong must guerdon all our deeds.

ONE YEAR APART

One year apart!
Thou in the silent land,—I on this shore,
Stand listening, as beside a closed door,
With passionate longing, once again to hear,
Thy voice, thy voice so dear.

One year apart!
Thou in the unseen land,—I on this shore,
Sit watching, watching, watching evermore,
With strained gaze, searching the earth-mists
through,
For the fond smile I knew.

One year apart!
Thou in the unknown land,—I on this shore,
Still linger 'mid the scenes we loved of yore,
And wonder where thou art—so strange it seems—
I walk as one who dreams.

One year apart!
Thou in the spirit land,—I, on this shore,
Shaken by yearnings all unknown before,
Would fain o'erleap the bounds of time and space,
To find thy dwelling place.

Hast thou no thought,
Within the spirit land, of this dim shore?
Hast thou forgotten all the love we bore?
Nay, love must live, whatever change befall!
Dost thou not hear my call?

Is there no way,
From out the spirit land unto this shore?
Shall death still baffle love forevermore?
From bonds of time, and earthly vestments free,
Canst thou not come to me?

YOU AND I

In the golden hours of morning,
In youth's bright unclouded weather,
We went journeying together,—
You and I.

Day by day in radiant vesture,
Hope and Love were with us walking,
And we listened to their talking,—
You and I.

But the sky above grew darker,
And we met some wintry weather,
As we journeyed on together,—
You and I.

Hope was restless and forsook us,
But Love did not droop nor falter,
And we plodded on beside her,
You and I.

Now Love wears the robe of sorrow;
And more bitter seems the weather,
For we walk no more together,
You and I.

RE-VISITED

After long years,
Again I open a familiar door,
With lingering steps, I tread the well known floor,
I pass from room to room, as oft of yore.

After long years!
But where art thou, Beloved? Thou and I
Under this roof-tree, in the days gone by
Essayed to dwell, in love serene and high.

We called it home;
This shelter for the spirit, that we reared;
And in the confidence of youth unseared,
We filled it with all things to us endeared.

We called it home!
Then wherefore art thou not beside me here,
With me recalling all its tender cheer,
Its hopes that faded into memories dear?

Art thou *not* here?
To eyes of flesh, indeed, I walk alone;
No shadow darkens near me, save my own,
Over the past, no other maketh moan.

But thou *art* here!
Thy presence goes with me from room to room;
I see thy face, framed in the dusky gloom,
I see it, luminous with youthful bloom.

I hear thy voice;
I listen for the greeti ng it doth bear;
I hear thy foot-fall coming up the stair;
Are these but lingering echoes on the air?

The feast is spread;
Across the table's width, thy smile I meet;
No other smile is unto me so sweet,
No other guest perceives the guest I greet.

Thou callest me!
I turn, and I behold thee sitting there,
Just as of old, in thy accustomed chair,
While a stray sunbeam plays about thy hair.

I do but dream!
I know that earth has lost its claim on thee;
And yet a dream, perchance, as near may be,
As waking, to the unsolved mystery,

Of life and death.
Nature doth guard her primal secrets well,
Yet Science with knit brows, doth slowly spell,
Letter by letter, all earth has to tell.

Do I but dream?
Science that can imprison the sun's ray
Until it doth all present scenes portray,
To resurrect the past may find a way.

Do I but dream!
Science that threads the ether and the wave,
With messages, weird-like, yet strong to save,
May it not sound the mystery of the grave?

Or do I wake?
It may be that the spirit-realm *is here*,
And were I in accordance with that sphere,
I should discern that still, *the loved are near*.

TO

C. M. B.

"I know not with what body come
The saints. But this I know, My Paradise
Will mean the resurrection of thine eyes."

H. H.

SINCE THOU ART GONE

Peopled with shadows, seems the world to me,
Since thou art gone!
Amid the city's thronging life I stray,
A lonely alien on a weary way,
Since thou art gone.

Even Nature's beauty suffereth eclipse,
Since thou art gone!
The grass seems not so green, the sky less blue,
The sunshine pales, dimmed is the rose's hue,
Since thou art gone.

A blight hath fallen upon love itself,
Since thou art gone!
The faces of my dear ones fainter gleam,
Their voices sound like voices in a dream,
Since thou art gone.

And like a crippled bird, my life drags on,
Since thou art gone!
Its hopes, its joys, lie trailing in the dust,
Before the awful mandate of the "Must,"
Since thou art gone.

THY BIRTHDAY

Thy birthday dawns, Beloved,
Dawns beautiful to view;
A tender blue sky bendeth,
Over a sea as blue.

Thy favorite pond lies gleaming
Within its leafy rim,
Its bright waves ripple softly
On sheltered beaches dim.

The fair green hills are luring
Up to their ozoned heights;
And every radiant blossom;
To its lone haunt invites.

When thou wert here, Beloved,
It was our joy to stray
Forth into Nature's bright domain,
There to keep holiday.

But the dear custom lapseth,
Dear by long habit grown;
I have no heart, Beloved,
To ramble forth alone.

I can but sit and wonder
Where thou dost wake this morn?
And what new vistas open,
While I wait here forlorn?

Does the day break in splendor?
Is the sky blue above?
Do friendly souls bring offerings
Of fruit and flowers and love?

Is there sweet household living,
And kindly service, blest?
The thrill of high endeavor,
The joy of work and rest?

Do mystic whispers stir thee,
On this thy day of birth,
Linking thy new existence
With thy brief life on earth?

Comes any fond remembrance,
Of friends, who here must stay?
Can love and grief and longing,
To reach thee, find a way?

Alas, alas, Beloved!
I send these anguished cries,
Across the awful silence,
That now between us lies.

But not a sound returneth,
And like a sense of doom,
The unrelenting silence,
Enfolds me in its gloom.

O EARTH-BORN HANDS AND LIPS AND EYES

O, earth-born hands and lips and eyes;
O touch and look so dear!
O voice, whose faintest cadences
Beguiled my ravished ear!

O, human heart and mortal mind,
Responsive to my own!
O, sense of sweet companionship,
That left me ne'er alone!

All, all are gone! Is there then nought
Outlasts the fleeting breath?
The informing spirit,—does that dwell
Beyond the reach of death?

COULD'ST THOU NOT TARRY HERE?

Could'st thou not tarry here; a little longer,
With us who loved thee so?
Thy flame of life, still mounting toward its zenith,
Could it be time to go?

With youthful energy unworn, unwasted,
With beauty still undimmed;
Each power, each grace, yet in exultant fullness,
The future all unlimned;

Why should'st thou yield thy place among the living,
Why hasten to depart?
Had earth no charm for thee? Had love most tender,
No claim upon thy heart?

Or did inexorable fate compel thee
To loosen thy firm hold;
Wresting from a reluctant hand, each blessing
That it would fain enfold?

Bidding thee turn away from scenes familiar,
From the dear haunts of earth;
No more to roam o'er sunny field and upland
Greeting the violet's birth?

No more, in marts of men, or haunts of pleasure,
With comrades dear to meet;
No more at eventide about the hearthstone
Thy chosen friends to greet?

Or, hast thou won perchance a better portion?
Did Fate mean thee no harm,

Bidding thee go, ere Time's despoiling finger,
Had robbed thee of one charm?

Never to know the weight of slow declining;
Nor any sordid care;
Unharmed of sorrow; with no idol broken,
No conscience pangs to bear?

Thus to abide, within our memories ever,
Clad in unfading youth;
While the swift seasons grave on all the living,
Deep lines of change and ruth.

Blinded by tears, I grope amid the shadows;
I cannot see the way
That thou hast gone; nor reason for thy going;
I seek some guiding ray.

And struggling on, I list with all my being,
If haply word or sign,
Floating like music, through the dreary silence,
May answer word of mine.

But still uncomforted, I grope and falter;
I hope and then despair;
Then hope again, that somewhere, yet, thou livest;
And Love may lead me there.

AGAIN THE SOUTH WIND BLOWING

Again the South Wind blowing,
Wakes bird and bee to mirth;
And Spring with tender blossoms
Is garlanding the earth.

Green leaves are all aflutter,
Soft odors fill the air,
And hearts responsive, waken
This pulsing life to share.

But I—who hailed this season
With ever new delight,—
Find now, there's nought but heart-ache,
In every sound and sight.

For in this glad awakening,
This stir that thrills the heart;
In all the pomp and splendor,
Thou hast, alas! no part.

A low grave on the hillside,
Whereon I drop sweet flowers;—
We call it thine, beloved,—
Doth haunt the weary hours.

IF I COULD KNOW

If I could know, beyond all sad surmising,
Beyond all doubts and fears,
That thou dost not look back with vain regretting
On thy brief span of years;

Nor feel that thou wert wronged in losing early
This life—this life so strange,
So sweet, so sad, so trivial yet so earnest;
This whirl of hope and change;

If I could know, beyond all vain surmising,
Beyond all doubt and fear,
That thou hast found some plane of high endeavor,
Some world of hope and cheer;

Some homelike shelter, where with force unhindered,
Thy nature may unfold,
And its bright promise yield a richer fruitage,
Than our sealed eyes behold;

I might let fall the burden of this grieving,
This weight that lays me low;
And go with patience, onward to the ending,
Content, no more to know.

With patience—though the way be long and lonely
Yea, with a sense of peace;
By hope sustained, hope of a blissful meeting,
When I have won release.

A MEMORY AND A HOPE

I stood breast-high amid the waves one day,
Watching afar, strong swimmers make their way
Among the wind-tossed crests, when suddenly
The rope to which I clung, dropped in the sea;
I lost my foothold on the shifting sand,
And the receding tide swept me from land.

I sank and rose again, breathless and weak,
And, then scarce conscious how or where to seek
For needed help,—through salt-spray blinded eyes,
I saw thy face above the waves arise;
I saw thee leave the group of swimmers there,
As though some prescient whisper stirred the air.

And thou didst turn and come toward me in haste,
With outstretched hand across the watery waste,
And smile of cheer that like a beacon burned;
Then pain and fear into rejoicing turned;
I caught thy hand, and thus, buoyed up by thee,
I felt at ease, even in that surging sea.

In the strange hour, when overwhelming Death,
Shall lay me low, and still my laboring breath;
And shut me from all sights and sounds of earth,
What star of hope shall brood above the dearth?
What first shall dawn upon the startled sight,
Of the freed spirit, poising for its flight?

I soothe my heart at least with this fond dream,
Lighting the future with an aureole gleam;
What though all else be strange, if I behold
The dear, dear face that was my joy of old?
I dream of thee, coming with outstretched hand,
To bid me welcome to the Unknown Land.

"My song, oft-sung is ended,
I have no other yet,
Save silence and forgetting,
And how can I forget?"

—*Scheffel*

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